

**NUMBER OF ANTI-SEMITIC INCIDENTS
SETS RECORD FOURTH YEAR IN ROW**

By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

NEW YORK, Feb. 7 (JTA) -- For the fourth year in a row, a record number of anti-Semitic incidents was committed in the United States, according to a national survey conducted by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

ADL's Audit of Anti-Semitic Incidents reveal that 1,685 incidents took place, including 927 acts of vandalism and 758 acts of harassment. The overall number represents an 18 percent increase over 1989's figures.

There was a particularly dramatic rise in campus bigotry last year, according to the report, up more than a third over the number of incidents in 1989.

Ninety-five anti-Semitic incidents of all types were reported on 57 college campuses. Over the past three years, the number of anti-Semitic incidents on campuses has jumped 72 percent, the report notes.

More vandalism -- arson, bombings, cemetery desecrations and swastika daubings on Jewish-owned and public property -- took place in 1989 than in 1990, making last year the second-highest year recorded since ADL began auditing anti-Semitism in 1979.

Harassment is at an all-time peak. Forms of harassment include assault and mail or phone threats, verbal abuse, and at least 30 cases of physical violence against Jews, most notably the assassination of Rabbi Meir Kahane in November.

"There is greater sensitivity to harassment like slurs," said Alan Schwartz, director of ADL's Research and Evaluation Department. "There is greater sensitivity to the harm of things that used to pass simply as pranks or jokes."

New York, California The Most

New York and California, the states with the most Jews, were by far the states with the most anti-Semitic activity. There were 296 incidents in New York, and 240 in California.

New Jersey had 162 incidents, Massachusetts 134, Florida 125, and Maryland 112.

"Several traditionally most-active states -- New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts and Michigan -- have reported slight decreases for 1990. However, this is more than offset by combined increases of reported incidents from Maryland, Illinois, California and Pennsylvania, as well as from generally less active areas -- e.g., Colorado, Wisconsin, New Mexico," the report states.

Nine states did not report any anti-Semitic crimes in 1990: Wyoming, which also did not report any for 1989, Arkansas, Iowa, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Vermont and West Virginia.

One important source of anti-Semitism, neo-Nazi Skinheads, was less of a factor in 1990, though the report indicates that "the violent crimes of such gangs remain a matter of serious concern."

A civil lawsuit won last year, brought by ADL and the Southern Poverty Law Center against Tom and John Metzger, leaders of the California-based White Aryan Resistance, and two neo-Nazi Skinheads in Portland, Ore., "should put

a dent in the ability of old-line hate groups to recruit young Skinheads and incite them to commit hate crimes," said Abraham Foxman, ADL national director.

The suit awarded \$12.5 million in damages to the family of Mulugeta Seraw, an Ethiopian student beaten to death by Portland Skinheads in 1988.

And though Seraw's family will probably never be able to recover the entire judgment, the judgment will "hopefully deter other" right-wing extremists, the report states.

"Another factor that had virtually disappeared in 1989 after leaping to prominence in 1988 -- i.e. anti-Semitic acts linked by their perpetrators to events in the Middle East -- again came to wide attention in 1990; such politically related anti-Semitism calls for especially intensive monitoring," according to the report.

In the first eight months of 1990, there were approximately 20 anti-Israel/pro-Palestinian threats made against Jews and graffiti on synagogues and other Jewish property.

By the end of the year, another 25 incidents contained references to the Persian Gulf crisis and efforts by anti-Israel forces to link Iraq's invasion of Kuwait to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

A decline in civility, increasingly crude popular culture and a troubled economy helped contribute to the increase in anti-Semitic incidents, according to the Civil Rights Division of ADL, which compiled the report.

"When millions of kids buy albums that contain violence toward women or ethnic slurs, it sends a degrading message which legitimizes that mentality," said Schwartz.

"It's something we should speak out against. Not to favor censorship, but everybody has the right to free speech, including those who want to criticize so-called art."

**CONGRESS TO QUERY U.S. OFFICIALS
OVER REPORTED DEATH OF SPIES IN SYRIA**
By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, Feb. 7 (JTA) -- The Senate Intelligence Committee plans to investigate allegations that Syria killed pro-Israel undercover agents working in a Damascus-based terrorist group after receiving U.S. data on Syria's links to terrorism.

Sen. David Boren (D-Okla.), the committee's chairman, announced the probe after congressional leaders met with President Bush for their weekly meeting Thursday.

The White House refused to comment on a report in The New York Times that the information was provided to Syrian President Hafez Assad by Secretary of State James Baker when they met in Damascus on Sept. 14.

Nor would it comment on Boren's planned investigation. "We don't comment on intelligence matters," said deputy White House spokesman Roman Popadiuk.

State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler issued a statement saying that "any suggestion that Secretary Baker handed over a demarche that led to the death of any individual is categorically untrue."

She added that the United States last year received a "credible and serious threat" against a U.S. ambassador in the Middle East. "Any demarche that may have been passed on such a subject would have been done solely to protect the life of an American ambassador and would be fully coordinated within this government, including our intelligence community."

An Israeli Embassy official here had no immediate reaction to the report.

The Times, quoting anonymous U.S. officials, reported that "two or three undercover agents believed to be working for Israel in a Syrian-based terrorist group were unmasked and killed last fall, not long after the United States gave the Damascus government information about terrorist activities in the country."

Those in the administration who favored disclosing U.S. terrorist data argued "that Mr. Assad should be given an unusually detailed briefing about the actions of Syrian-based terrorists, to impress upon him the weight of the evidence against his government," the Times said.

The link between the killings and the sharing of U.S. intelligence "has not been proved," the Times reported. "It is a causal relationship," it quoted one official as saying. "There is no doubt in my mind."

Baker, in testimony Thursday before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said he had no plans to remove Syria from the U.S. list of countries engaged in "state-sponsored terrorism."

IDF STAGES FIRST GROUND ATTACK TO STOP ROCKETS FIRED FROM LEBANON By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Feb. 7 (JTA) -- The Israel Defense Force sent a raiding party into southern Lebanon on Thursday morning to attack what it described as a major training facility of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

The IDF raid beyond the security zone was made by an infantry unit consisting of soldiers of the crack Golani Brigade. They struck six miles north of the zone and did extensive damage to the PLO base, the IDF said.

There were no Israeli casualties, and all troops returned safely to their base in Israel.

Earlier attacks were by made by jet fighter-bombers, helicopter gunships and artillery operated by the IDF and its allied South Lebanon Army. The attacks were aimed at PLO bases and Katyusha rocket-launching sites.

The IDF said the main target of assault helicopters Wednesday was a mobile Katyusha rocket launcher mounted on a light truck. The IDF claimed the launcher and vehicle were destroyed and its three occupants severely wounded.

It was the first ground foray by IDF troops into Lebanon since the PLO stepped up Katyusha rocket attacks against Israel on Jan. 29, purportedly at the request of Yasir Arafat to open a "second front" in the Persian Gulf war.

The action occurred as the Lebanese regular army moved into southern Lebanon to extend the authority of the Syrian-backed central government in Beirut.

Israel warned that if the Lebanese troops failed to remove Palestinian fighters from the area, Israel would continue to attack them.

Hundreds of PLO fighters reportedly have withdrawn to bases east of the port city of Sidon, although witnesses say the pro-Iranian Hezbollah (Party of God) militia remains dug in close to the

Israeli-controlled southern Lebanon security zone.

"Israel expects the deployment of Lebanese Army units north and west of the security zone will bring about the removal of terrorist organizations from these areas," a Defense Ministry statement said.

DESPITE KING HUSSEIN'S IRAQ TILT, ISRAEL PREFERS HE REMAIN AS KING By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Feb. 7 (JTA) -- Israel retains its interest in the stability of the present regime in Jordan even though King Hussein has formally aligned himself with Iraq, Foreign Minister David Levy declared here Thursday.

He said the king's speech in Amman on Wednesday ending his professed neutrality in the Persian Gulf war was "very sad and problematic."

Israel continues to hope that the king will maintain control over his country, Levy said in a television interview, adding that Israel has made that position clear to Jordan "these very days" in discreet ways.

King Hussein maintained that the Gulf war was aimed against "all Arabs and all Moslems, not against Iraq alone," and is intended to assert "foreign hegemony" in the Middle East.

In Washington, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker asserted a similar policy in testimony to the House Foreign Affairs Committee on Wednesday. He said the United States saw no desirable alternative in Jordan to King Hussein's Hashemite regime.

Levy said he was gratified by U.S. expressions of readiness-in-principle to give favorable consideration to special aid requests from Israel. He indicated he would be meeting with Baker shortly, "either here or there" and that the aid issue would be closely examined.

But Levy discouraged media speculation over specific figures. He stressed that Israel had no intention of "exploiting" the war situation and the fact that it sustained direct and indirect damage through enemy action.

RED CROSS PRESSED BY PRO-PALESTINIANS By Tamar Levy

GENEVA, Feb. 7 (JTA) -- Pro-Palestinian demonstrators occupied the main hall of International Red Cross headquarters here Thursday, demanding that the humanitarian agency confirm their allegations of Israeli maltreatment of the Palestinians.

The group, calling itself Swiss Solidarity with the People of Palestine, claimed Israel was using the Persian Gulf war to destroy the economy of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The protesters referred to the prolonged curfew in the territories and to the slow distribution of gas masks to Palestinians which, they said, excluded children under 15.

The group demanded that the International Committee of the Red Cross confirm their charges, publicize them and appeal to the Israeli government to abide by the Geneva Conventions.

Dave de la Praz, an ICRC delegate who met with the protesters, said the agency was aware of some of the conditions they mentioned but did not have sufficient information to issue a statement, the daily Le Courrier reported.

He suggested a further meeting Friday, to which the group agreed.

GERMANY TO TIGHTEN EXPORT LAWS IN WAKE OF ARMS HELP GIVEN IRAQ

By David Kantor

BONN, Feb. 7 (JTA) -- The German government said Thursday that it would tighten the laws against illegal export of weapons and weapons technology and increase penalties for violations.

Draft legislation prepared by the government would raise the maximum prison term to 10 years.

Profits from illegal arms deals would be subject to confiscation, and customs officers would be authorized to tap the telephones of suspected firms and check their incoming and outgoing mail.

The government's announcement came as the German media continued to accuse the authorities of laxity and to name companies it said had illicit arms deals with Iraq and other countries.

The managers of several firms denied on television Wednesday night that German industry as a whole collaborated with Iraq to develop chemical weapons and extend the range of its Scud missiles.

The industrialists argued that Germany has the best controls in the world to detect and punish violators of arms exports regulations.

The weekly news magazine Stern charged, meanwhile, that the Dusseldorf-based Thyssen company built a huge laboratory for Iraq in 1980 and 1981 for research and experiments on chemical and biological weapons.

It said six other German companies were also involved in the project.

According to Stern, the \$14 million contract came to the attention of the German secret service, which reported it to government agencies. To obtain the order, the company had to sign an agreement not to deal with Israel, Stern said.

Thyssen promptly denied the allegation. But a spokesman confirmed that it signed a boycott pledge at the insistence of the Iraqis. He said it was "routine" in normal trade relations.

The German television channel ZDF, meanwhile, reported that Libya has accumulated a huge arsenal of chemical and biological weapons protected by a system of bunkers.

The report said experts and technicians of several nationalities, including Germans, are helping the Libyans run the facility.

In 1984, a British magazine, New Scientist, reported that an unidentified West German firm was helping Iraq build vast underground bunkers around Baghdad to protect top officials from nuclear, chemical or biological warfare.

Each bunker reportedly can hold 600 people for two weeks. A sophisticated ventilation system was reportedly supplied by the West German firm Artos.

BONN CONTINUES AID TALK WITH ISRAEL DESPITE STRONG ANTI-GERMAN FEELINGS

By David Kantor

BONN, Feb. 7 (JTA) -- Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher received a delegation of high-ranking Israelis at his office here Thursday to discuss expanded economic relations, even as the Bonn government tries to overcome the anti-German emotions rampant among Israelis.

The Israeli group was headed by the ambassador to Bonn, Benjamin Navon, and Ya'acov Cohen, a deputy foreign minister in charge of economic cooperation.

In Jerusalem, the German ambassador to

Israel, Otto van der Gabletz, admitted Wednesday that his country had not done enough to stem the flow of weapons to Iraq.

He said that was especially true with respect to the sale of chemicals, which in the past seemed "benign."

Germany has already airlifted anti-missile and anti-aircraft defenses to Israel and plans a major military assistance program.

But anti-German feelings are running high in Israel since the disclosure that German firms helped Saddam Hussein build the Iraqi war machine, including improved Scud missiles and the potential for chemical warfare.

Thursday's meeting was the first of a series of consultations agreed to when Genscher was in Jerusalem last month shortly after the first Scud attack on Israel.

It concentrated on ways to encourage Germans to invest in Israel in such areas as finance, research and agriculture.

No figures were mentioned, but it is understood Bonn will make available to Israel sufficient credit to help it through its current economic crisis, which was worsened by the Gulf war.

Another idea raised at the meeting here Thursday was German help to Israel to absorb the mass immigration of Soviet Jews. German and Israeli officials reportedly have discussed material or financial aid packages to help Israel cope with the wave of new immigrants.

The German envoy to Israel, appearing at the B'nai B'rith World Center in Jerusalem, confirmed that Israeli authorities and German security services cooperated in the past to obtain information about the transfer of German arms and technology to Iraq.

Ambassador von der Gabletz said the strong anti-war movement in Germany today was a result of the Nazi past.

The peace demonstrators are products of a peaceful environment that has existed in Europe for almost two generations, he explained.

The envoy dismissed neo-Nazis in Germany as a "minor problem" compared to neo-Nazis in the United States and France.

(JTA correspondent Gil Sedan in Jerusalem contributed to this report.)

SHAMIR SCORES HIGH IN POLL

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Feb. 7 (JTA) -- Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's handling of Israeli policy in the Persian Gulf war has sent his approval rating to an all-time high of 49.8 percent, according to a poll by the Public Opinion Research Institute published Thursday in Ma'ariv.

In a PORI poll in December, the prime minister's performance was approved by only 26.8 percent of the respondents.

Shamir's popularity has rubbed off on other members of his government since the war began, even those not directly involved with security.

Defense Minister Moshe Arens' rating climbed from 31.8 to 54.5 percent since the Gulf crisis began. Housing Minister Ariel Sharon went from 37.4 percent approval in December to 49.6 percent now.

Foreign Minister David Levy is approved by 34.2 percent, up from 26.7 percent in December.

Finance Minister Yitzhak Moda'i remains the least popular of the senior Cabinet ministers. Nevertheless, his rating increased by 10 points, from 18.1 to 28.4 percent since the war started.

**BEHIND THE HEADLINES:
IN SECRET, ISRAEL AND IRAQ
FOSTERED TIES IN MID-1980s**
By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Feb. 7 (JTA) -- Some time back in the mid-1980s, discreet contacts between Jerusalem and Baghdad were established through Washington, the Jerusalem weekly Kol Ha'ir recalls in its latest issue.

Nizar Hamdoun, Iraqi ambassador to the United States at the time, was cultivating American Jews. The so-called "Iraqi option" was in vogue in certain political circles in Israel.

They saw Saddam Hussein as leaning toward the moderate Arab camp and certainly preferable to the fanatical anti-Zionism of the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini of Iran, with whom Hussein was locked in mortal combat.

Recollections of the "Iraqi option" contain bitter irony now. Israel has been hit by 30 Iraqi missiles in little more than two weeks and lives under threat of the chemical and biological weapons Hussein may possess.

But to a number of respected Israeli politicians and academicians, peace with Iraq seemed at one time logical and possible.

As far as can be pinpointed, the "Iraqi option" dates back to 1987.

Its proponents included Moshe Shahal, then the minister of energy; Labor Knesset member Binyamin Ben-Eliezer; Professor Amatzia Bar-Am of Haifa University; and Knesset member Ran Cohen of the Citizens Rights Movement.

Iraq seemed to be winning its war with Iran. Although it remained the only Arab combatant not to sign an armistice with Israel after the 1948 War of Independence, Baghdad was on friendly terms with Jordan and Egypt, supporters of the more moderate wing of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

The situation seemed ripe for the emergence of a moderate Arab bloc in the Middle East, anchored in Cairo and Baghdad.

Khomeini Seen As More Dangerous

Israelis who thought so saw it as the natural closing of a circle.

Israel was one of the strongest supporters of the U.S.-backed regime of the Iranian Shah, which was overthrown in 1979. The Jewish state continued to clandestinely supply arms to non-Arab Iran despite the anti-Israel virulence of its Islamic fundamentalist leadership.

The Israeli air raid that destroyed Iraq's nuclear reactor in 1981 was indeed a gift to the Khomeini regime.

But after the establishment of a Labor-Likud national unity government in 1984 with Laborite Shimon Peres as its first prime minister, Khomeini was seen to be far more dangerous to Israel than Saddam Hussein.

Professor Bar-Am reported in a 1987 article that the Iraqi ambassador to Washington was actively courting the American Jewish leadership, even giving a dinner in honor of a group of mostly Jewish academicians and business leaders.

The Iraqi envoy surpassed himself when, speaking at Brandeis University, he asserted that the Palestinian problem was a matter for Israelis and Palestinians to solve, not a problem for Iraq.

The Iraqi option collapsed because Saddam Hussein preferred crude ideology to pragmatism, Bar-Am told Kol Ha'ir.

According to Ben-Eliezer of Labor, Prime

Minister Yitzhak Shamir was also partly to blame. His hostility toward the Jordanian option pursued by his foreign minister, Shimon Peres, wrecked the secret "London Accord" between Peres and King Hussein of Jordan.

Had that agreement, reached at a secret meeting in the British capital in 1988, been adopted by Israel, it would have had a positive influence on the PLO and Iraq, Ben-Eliezer believes.

He thinks Saddam Hussein would have become part of a comprehensive peace process in the region under U.S. leadership. He would have enjoyed generous American economic aid and probably given up his designs on Kuwait.

In any event, Ben-Eliezer claims, Shamir was directly responsible for pushing King Hussein into the arms of Saddam Hussein.

Ben-Eliezer said the Jordanian ruler cast his lot with Iraq because he feared that the right-wing Likud regime intended to implement "by force" the doctrine enunciated by its most outspoken hard-liner, Ariel Sharon, that Jordan is a Palestinian state, which would spell the end of the Hashemite monarchy.

To most observers, the "Iraqi option" stands as further proof that events in the Middle East are about as predictable as the patterns the wind makes on the desert sands.

**FULL JACKSON-VANIK WAIVER UNLIKELY
BECAUSE OF BALTIC CRISIS, SAYS BUSH**
By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Feb. 7 (JTA) -- President Bush says he will not recommend to Congress a complete waiver of Jackson-Vanik Amendment sanctions as long as the Soviet Union continues to use force against the independence movement in the Baltic republics.

"It will be extraordinarily difficult to pass anything of this nature in terms of waivers, given the present situation inside the Soviet Union," Bush said Wednesday evening after a speech to the Economic Club of New York.

The president said he was "very happy with the exodus" of Jews from the Soviet Union, but the repression in the Baltics makes it difficult to move trade relations with the Soviets forward.

Last December, Bush announced a waiver of certain restrictions in the Jackson-Vanik Amendment to the U.S. Trade Act of 1974. That allowed the Soviet Union to receive up to \$1 billion in U.S. government-guaranteed credits to buy wheat and other U.S. food products.

But Bush did not lift the major provision of the amendment, which bars the Soviet Union from receiving most-favored-nation trade benefits. He said that the Supreme Soviet must first pass long-promised legislation codifying emigration reforms.

According to the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews, the emigration reform legislation is item 15 on the agenda proposed by the Supreme Soviet's Legislative Committee and therefore unlikely to come up in its spring session.

The Union of Councils opposes a complete waiver of Jackson-Vanik sanctions until the legislation is adopted and implemented, though it did not object to Bush's decision to extend the trade credits last December.

Prior to Bush's decision, the National Conference on Soviet Jewry had urged the president to waive all Jackson-Vanik sanctions for one year, including the ban on most-favored-nation trade benefits.